

THE SOMALI SPARROW *PASSER CASTANOPTERUS*: A BREEDING RECORD FOR EAST AFRICA  
Hall & Moreau (1970) describe the nominate race of the Somali Sparrow *Passer castanopterus* as the "common house sparrow of the coastal plain" of northern Somalia, also extending into adjacent highlands. Much less, however, is known of the distinctive race *fulgens*, which occurs in northern Kenya around the Lake Turkana basin, in areas to the east and west of the lake, and in adjacent border areas of Ethiopia (Hall & Moreau 1970, Britton 1980). Recent sightings of *fulgens* in the Dida Galgalla desert and between Lodwar and Ferguson's Gulf (all in northern Kenya) are the first "for many years" (East African Bird Report 1978 and 1979, *Scopus* 2: 105-144 and *Scopus* 3: 105-140).

On 23 May 1981, I found a solitary nest of the race *fulgens* at 2°04'N, 37°37'E, about 4 km northeast of Korrr, in the Kaisut Desert of northern Kenya. The nest was at a height of about 4 m in the canopy of a solitary acacia, about 100 m from a dry, acacia-lined wadi.

The young birds could not be seen due to the position of the nest, but they kept up a continuous loud high chirruping. At first only the female of the pair was seen, perched a little distance from the nest. But the male appeared later, flying from the nearby wadi with a 3-cm green caterpillar, which was fed to the nestlings. The bright yellow tinge to the ventral torso and sides of the face of the male confirmed the racial identity.

This race presumably breeds regularly in northern Kenya and southernmost Ethiopia, but this appears to be the first confirmed record of its breeding for East Africa.

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RAPTOR AND STORK MIGRATION AT NAMANGA, SOUTHERN KENYA During the morning of 24 November 1980, immediately to the east of Namanga, Kenya/Tanzania border (2°33'S, 36°47'E), we watched a large-scale migration of raptors and storks.

At around 08:00, a flock of large eagles *Aquila* was noted soaring over the northern end of the Oldoinyo Orok ridge, immediately to the north of Namanga township. This flock, comprising about 30 birds, moved south-southwest along the top of the ridge and was lost to view; poor light conditions prevented their identification.

A little later, larger numbers of eagles began to soar over the northern end of the ridge and, instead of moving southwards along it, began to drift south-southwestwards over the Namanga township area. We were positioned on the main A104 road, and these large flocks passed directly and impressively overhead.

Between 08:25 and 09:25, we counted a minimum of 250 Steppe Eagles *Aquila nipalensis*, all of which were in the distinctive immature plumage. They were accompanied by a total of 150 White Storks *Ciconia ciconia*, in loose groups.

An immature Imperial Eagle *Aquila heliaca* was identified by the following features: flying amongst the Steppe Eagles along the western slopes of Oldoinyo Orok, it was first distinguished by the very dark, even blackish, colouration of the upperparts, which also showed a paler rump, a small whitish area at the base of the primaries, and a pale head. It then flew out from the hillside and directly over us, in the company of three immature Steppe Eagles and along with the general movement of the eagle flocks. From below, it was at once distinguished by its great size, being markedly larger than the immediately adjacent Steppe Eagles, at first giving the impression that the nearby Steppe Eagles were at a much greater height. The bird was generally dark below, with a very diffuse pale panel on the inner primaries.

The eagle and stork flocks moved on out of sight to the south or south-southeast. Extrapolation of this route would take the birds between Mts Meru